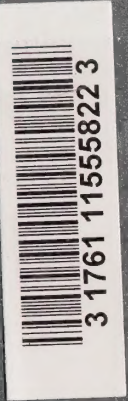


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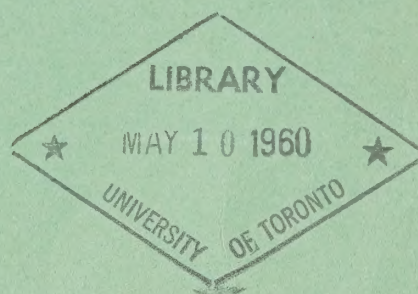


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# CHILD WELFARE IN CANADA

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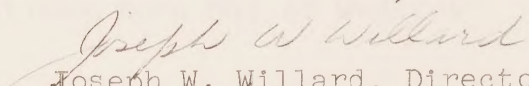




## FOREWORD

This bulletin was prepared in response to requests, many of which come from abroad, for information about child welfare programs in Canada. It presents in broad outline the structure and scope of child welfare services. It is hoped that this view of the general pattern of services will provide a useful background for study of particular programs, such as child protection and adoption.

The bulletin was prepared in the Research and Statistics Division by Mr. R. B. Splane under the direction of Mrs. Flora Hurst, Supervisor of the Welfare Section.

  
Joseph W. Willard, Director,  
Research and Statistics Division.





## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
<u>Foreword</u>	
<u>General Provisions for the Welfare of Children</u>	1
Economic Protection of the Family	
Health Services	
Educational Provisions for Children	
Minimum Age Legislation	
Private Welfare Services for Families and Children	
<u>The Development of Child Welfare Services</u>	15
The Institutional Stage	
The Children's Aid Movement	
Growth of Public Child Welfare	
Development of Comprehensive Services	
Integration of Family and Child Welfare	
Present Organization of Child Welfare Services	
<u>Child Welfare Programs</u>	29
Protection Services	
Juvenile Correctional Services	
Child Care Services	
Adoption	
Services For Children Born Out of Wedlock	
<u>Administration of Child Welfare Services</u>	39
Legislation and Organization	
Financing	
Staffing	
Reporting and Statistics	
<u>Institutional Care for Children</u>	47
<u>Community Organization for Child Welfare</u>	51





## GENERAL PROVISIONS FOR THE WELFARE OF CHILDREN

A deep concern for the welfare of children who experience neglect or deprivation is of long-standing in Canada and has led to the development of special services for their protection and care in all Canadian provinces. Such children, fortunately, form only a small percentage of Canada's six million children<sup>1/</sup> who, in the main, enjoy the advantage of living with their own families and of receiving the individual care and affection that are required for their sound development.

To meet the needs of all Canadian children, programs are required not only for those who are deprived of normal home care but also for the great majority who are helped most effectively through broad measures to strengthen and support the family. Thus a description of child welfare in Canada, though principally concerned with programs for the first group, must include an account of the provisions designed to meet the general needs of children and the measures which have been taken to sustain or improve family life.

The family is the basic social unit in Canadian life, and as such is supported in a variety of ways by law, custom and practice. While legislation varies from province to

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<sup>1/</sup> Children under the age of eighteen years, in 1956 numbered 5,939,107 or 36.9 per cent of the total population. Children under sixteen years numbered 5,473,363 or 34 per cent of the population.

province, the requirement that the family assume broad responsibility for its children is stated unequivocally in some statutes and is implicit in others. Parents have the rights and responsibilities of guardianship over the person and property of their children as long as they are able to exercise them in a responsible manner. It is only when they seriously neglect their parental responsibilities that their guardianship rights are affected. Where the need is apparent for a transfer of guardianship in the interests of the children, legislation in all the provinces and the territories provides for such transfer. Thus the state recognizes an ultimate responsibility for the welfare of children who are deprived of adequate care within their own family. The first concern of the public authority, however, is to strengthen the family unit in its task of providing the basic needs of the children within it.

#### Economic Protection of the Family

A number of economic measures have been taken by federal and provincial governments to provide or ensure income to those families whose normal source of income is interrupted and who have responsibilities for caring for children. These measures include maintenance programs such as unemployment insurance, workmen's compensation, war veterans pensions and allowances, and general assistance, as well as legislation for enforcing the maintenance of wives and children by deserting husbands.



They also include other programs which affect families with children, notably the federal family allowances program covering practically all children and the provincial mothers' allowances programs.

The federal family allowance program, which was established toward the end of the Second World War, is primarily a social security measure designed to lessen the economic handicap of families with children. Allowances are six dollars a month for children under ten and eight dollars for children aged ten to sixteen. The Family Allowances Act stipulates that the allowances are to be used for the "maintenance, care, training, education and advancement of the child". It also requires compliance with provincial school attendance regulations as a condition of payment for children of school age. Family allowances have made an important contribution to the general welfare of Canadian children.

For children immigrating with their families there is a special measure comparable to family allowances covering a child's first year in Canada during which family allowances are not payable. This program of family assistance for immigrants and settlers provides \$60 for the year, payable on behalf of each child under sixteen years of age who is supported by the immigrant or settler. Payments are made quarterly upon the application of the parent and, like family allowances, they are not subject to a means test.

Provincial mothers' allowances programs, the first of which was established in 1916, extend financial assistance to all mothers in need who have lost their husbands and who need financial help in caring for their children. These programs followed the introduction of workmen's compensation laws which provided support to the widows of men killed in industrial accidents and war pension measures which provided allowances to women who had lost their husbands in the defense of the nation. By 1949 all provinces had programs providing aid to widows with dependent children and to mothers with husbands in mental hospital. In some provinces eligibility now includes divorced, separated, deserted and unmarried mothers and mothers whose husbands are disabled or are in penal institutions. The allowances, which vary from province to province, are payable while the mother is caring for one or more children. There are also provincial differences in the maximum ages of children who may benefit by mothers' allowances, the variation being from fifteen to eighteen years, with all provinces permitting some extension of the allowance if the child is attending school.

Families in need who are not eligible for benefits under the special programs, such as mothers' allowances, which are designed to meet the needs of particular categories of persons, may receive help under the general assistance measures which exist in all provinces. There is a trend



toward broadening the scope of these programs and reducing that of the categorical programs. Thus in two provinces persons formerly receiving mothers' allowances are now in receipt of benefits under social assistance programs.

These general or social assistance programs are usually administered by the local municipality with the costs shared by the provincial and federal governments. Most provinces, however, administer the program in their unorganized territories and there are some other administrative variations from province to province. In addition to administering general assistance and other income maintenance programs, local welfare offices, whether municipal or provincial, increasingly provide other services for families and children. In some centres these may include nursery and day care programs, services to deserted wives, public housing, rehabilitation programs and the supervision of welfare institutions.

#### Health Services

Recognition that the health of the Canadian child is a resource of the highest individual and national importance has brought into being a broad range of health measures under both private and public auspices. In general the child finds himself in a family which secures the major part of its health services on a private basis although publicly organized programs play an increasingly important role.

Historically, children along with the rest of the population benefited from the measures to combat communicable diseases which were developed on a significant scale in the latter part of the Nineteenth Century. Infant and maternal death rates remained high, however, and it became increasingly apparent by the early years of this century that special public health measures were required for mothers and children. Great strides have since been made in developing pre-natal and post-natal services, providing maternity beds and bassinets, reducing the incidence of childhood diseases and developing programs of treatment and rehabilitation for crippled children.

A continuing emphasis on child and maternal health is reflected in services provided at all levels of government and under private auspices. At the local level health departments or health units provide a wide range of direct services in association with hospitals, physicians and voluntary health agencies. All ten provinces have maternal and child health programs within their health departments and a Division of Maternal and Child Health within the federal Department of National Health and Welfare offers consultative services.

The great majority of Canadian children are born in hospital. In all but two provinces this is true of nearly all births and for the country as a whole nearly 90 per cent of births occur in maternity or general



hospitals. Children needing later hospital care are normally treated in general hospitals serving all age groups but there are also five general hospitals for children, four children's orthopedic hospitals and a number of rehabilitation centres.

Pre-natal and post-natal health care is principally provided by the private family physician; an important role is also played by visiting nursing organizations, and by local public health units. Public services include nursing visits to the home and well baby clinics for the health supervision of infants and pre-school children.

Children also receive health care through school health services which have been established in every province. Programs include general medical examinations, visual and audiometric testing and in some provinces preventive dental health services. In addition, school health services are concerned with the school environment and involved in the health teaching program.

Services for handicapped children include a number of long established programs for the training of blind and deaf children and more recently developed services for orthopedically handicapped and cerebral palsied children. As the concept of what constitutes a handicapped child has been broadened and as increased diagnostic and treatment skills and facilities have

become available, more adequate services have been established in all provinces. Programs which combine public and private endeavour include case-finding, team diagnostic appraisal, treatment and a range of rehabilitation services.

There is increased recognition of the mental health needs of children. Child guidance clinics staffed by psychiatrists, psychologists and social workers have been organized in the larger centres and travelling mental health clinics, usually for both adults and children, extend these public services to many other localities. A number of institutions for emotionally disturbed children have been established and Canada's first psychiatric hospital for children was opened in 1958. Seven provinces maintain institutions for mentally deficient children and in recent years there has been a rapid expansion of educational and other community services for children who are mentally retarded.

A major emphasis in the protection of children's health has been placed on immunization programs. A notable example of their successful application has been the anti-poliomyelitis campaign. Through agreements with the federal Government the provincial health departments have made the Salk vaccine for free inoculation of children and most provinces also provide care free of charge or at nominal cost to poliomyelitis patients during the acute and



post-paralytic stages of the disease. The dramatic reduction in the incidence of the disease constitutes the most recent chapter in the long story of success in attacking the principal diseases of childhood.

Children, along with other members of their families, are benefiting from the public assumption of hospital and, to a lesser extent, medical costs. Free or assisted maternity services have been in existence for some years in a number of provinces and the Province of Newfoundland selected children under sixteen years of age as the first group to receive, free of charge, full hospital care including medical and surgical services. Participation in a federal-provincial program under the Hospital Insurance and Diagnostic Services Act of 1957 began in 1958 and by January 1959 all but three of the provinces were participating; negotiations with the other provinces and territories are proceeding. Major goals of the program are to make hospital and diagnostic services universally available and to relieve families and individuals of the burden of heavy expenditures for hospital care.

#### Educational Provisions for Children

There is firm recognition in Canada of the right of children to an education which will fit them for economic, cultural and political participation in contemporary society. The provision of elementary education

to the great majority of Canadian children had been achieved well before the confederation of the Canadian provinces in 1867. In the decades that followed, education became free and compulsory with the effective enforcement of attendance beginning in the 1890's. Four provinces now require school attendance to age sixteen, five to the age of fifteen and one to fourteen. In most provinces certain exemptions are allowed under specified circumstances to permit children to remain out of school when their services are needed in farming, home duties or other necessary employment.

Secondary education has also been long accepted as a necessary preparation to modern living, and technical and commercial courses have gained an established place along with the original academic sequence required for university entrance. Over 95 per cent of Canadian children attend primary and secondary schools in which all costs are borne by public funds.

Means of assisting children possessing the necessary capacity to receive a higher education are being progressively increased. A broad program of university expansion is proceeding, with extensive public and private financing for new facilities and for enlarged bursary and scholarship funds.

### Minimum Age Legislation

A high degree of success has been achieved in Canada in preventing child labour. In addition to the requirement that children attend school to the ages mentioned above, provincial legislation and local ordinances contain restrictions on the types, places and hours of employment in which children and youth may be engaged. There are also provincial provisions to regulate the minimum age of marriage, for entering into contracts and for admission to certain types of places of amusement.

### Private Welfare Services for Families and Children

In addition to the programs described above, most of which are under public auspices, reference must be made to the important work of the many private or voluntary agencies which contribute to the welfare of families and children. These include child and youth organizations with recreational and character building programs such as the Young Men's Christian Association, Young Women's Christian Association, Boy Scouts, Girl Guides, and similar organizations, many of which function under religious auspices. They include, as well, associations on behalf of children with health problems or educational needs such as associations to assist in improving facilities and services for retarded, ill or crippled children, Home and School groups in the field of education, and voluntary welfare agencies with a variety of purposes and programs.



Among the latter are family welfare agencies which have been organized in all of the large cities and in a number of smaller urban centres. They offer casework services to families experiencing the variety of problems produced by the stress of modern life. While family agencies offer some material aid, the emphasis has long been away from its provision, which is regarded as the role of the public authorities, and toward counselling concerning problems such as marital relations, parent-child relations, and family budgeting. Some agencies offer combined family and child welfare services as part of the general trend to treat child welfare problems within the framework of the family wherever this is possible.

Visiting homemaker and day care services constitute additional supports to family and child welfare. Visiting homemaker services, through which a carefully selected woman with skills in homemaking assumes the care of a household when the person usually responsible for it is ill or away, have proved of great value in preventing the temporary placement of children when illness or some other problem threatens to leave the children without adequate care. Home-maker services are supported increasingly by public grants and, in one province, are provided as part of the social assistance program by a public department.

This increased assumption of public responsibility constitutes a recent illustration of the historic process by which services initially provided under voluntary auspices are accepted as a legitimate responsibility of government. Day care services for children which have been established in a few communities provide a further example. They were, initially, organized privately but now receive increasing public support as larger numbers of mothers become engaged in employment outside the home and as the need is recognized for properly constituted centres for the care of their children.

It will be apparent that the broad assumption of public responsibility for services to children has not destroyed voluntary endeavour. In the fields of health, education and welfare, private citizens continue to form associations for the establishment of new services, for the support and improvement of existing ones and for their better planning and co-ordination.





THE DEVELOPMENT OF CHILD WELFARE SERVICES

Child welfare services in Canada have developed in widely different ways and at different speeds in the various provinces but it is nonetheless possible to discern four or five stages or periods in the history of Canadian child welfare, each distinguished by a characteristic emphasis in the administration of child welfare programs. One may be referred to as the institutional stage, another, less easily delimited in time, as the period dominated by the children's aid movement and a third, as the stage in which public child welfare assumed greater and, in some provinces, predominant importance. A fourth period has witnessed the development of comprehensive child welfare services and there is some evidence to suggest that Canada is moving toward yet another stage in which a significant effort is being made to achieve a closer integration of child and family welfare services.

The Institutional Stage

The first services for children in Canada were those established in French Canada under the auspices of the religious orders of the Roman Catholic Church. Institutions were founded to meet a variety of needs including that of the orphan or abandoned child, and the practice of dealing with welfare problems through the use of the large institution became deeply rooted in the social pattern of the community.

In two of the Atlantic provinces, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, the English Poor Law was introduced and children were cared for in public alms houses which also received adults with a variety of problems. In these and the other Atlantic provinces and in what later became the province of Ontario, separate children's institutions under private auspices were also established."

This institutional approach to the needs of children remained predominant in all provinces until nearly the end of the Nineteenth Century and, in some, extended well into the Twentieth. During this period a few examples are to be found of children being publicly supported in foster homes and of children, in some number, being bound out as apprentices or placed for adoption. The congregate institution and the orphanage, however, were the principal means used to meet the needs of the child deprived of his own home and family.

Long after the custodial type institution had ceased to be the chief means of caring for children deprived of their own families it continued to be employed to some extent in all provinces.<sup>1/</sup> In recent years the trend away from such use has continued but specialized institutional programs have increasingly been created to meet the needs of specific groups of children such as the emotionally disturbed.

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<sup>1/</sup> Institutional programs are discussed more fully on pp. 40-42 of this bulletin.

### The Children's Aid Movement

Toward the end of the 1880's, public attention was forcibly drawn to increasing numbers of children in the larger centres who were found to be growing up without proper care or supervision. For most of these children placement in an institution was not a satisfactory solution. To meet the problem, the children's aid movement came into being and within a few years became a major factor in child welfare in Canada. Borrowing from earlier movements for more humane treatment to animals, children's aid societies, composed of and supported by interested citizens, were given legislative authority under children's protection acts to intervene on behalf of children who were being maltreated or exploited or were uncared for. The societies, particularly in their early years, sought to protect children in their own homes through penalties of fine or imprisonment against parents and others who were declared by a court to be guilty of "neglecting" children for whom they were responsible. Where a child's protection required his removal to a place of safety, a Court could transfer guardianship to a society and require the municipality in which the child had residence, to pay the cost of his maintenance and care.

The Province of Ontario, where children's aid societies were first organized, expressed its interest in the children's aid movement not only by passing the protective



legislation essential for their work, but by appointing, in 1893, a provincial superintendent of neglected children who then assumed leadership in encouraging the establishment of new societies and later in setting standards for their operation and program. Provincial grants were also extended to the societies so that in addition to funds subscribed privately they received public funds from both the municipal and provincial levels of government.

At first the societies worked largely, if not entirely, through volunteers. Children were placed, as far as possible, in free foster homes and were visited by volunteer members of children's visiting committees. The need for employed staff soon became imperative, however, and with the appointment of paid officers, the foundation was laid for the later development of agencies administered and staffed by professionally qualified social workers.

The societies, through their work in carrying out duties under provincial legislation, in receiving public financial support, and in acting on the instruction of the Courts in the matter of the guardianship of children, express the public interest in, and control of, child welfare services. Their structure and organization also made it possible for them to give scope to voluntary endeavour through the citizens who form the membership of the societies, who make up the majority of their boards of directors (the municipalities are usually also represented) and who contribute financially to their work.

The children's aid movement reached its height in the early decades of the century and resulted in the formation of children's aid societies in nearly all provinces. The societies did not take firm root everywhere, however, and now cover the whole province only in Ontario and New Brunswick. They are organized in most communities in Nova Scotia and in the more populous areas of Manitoba and British Columbia. In all there are over ninety children's aid societies, and the children's aid movement continues to be an important force in child welfare in Canada.

#### Growth of Public Child Welfare

The last three or four decades, and especially the years since the Second World War, have witnessed a notable growth in public child welfare services. Child welfare programs are almost wholly public in Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island, Saskatchewan and Alberta. Some direct public services are provided in Nova Scotia and public services cover most of Manitoba and British Columbia outside the large cities. With the exception of Alberta, which delegates substantial responsibility for child welfare to the municipality, the services are mainly provided by provincial welfare staffs, normally through regional welfare offices. Provincial Governments which do not provide direct services nonetheless express the public interest in the ways noted earlier, in respect to their relations with children's aid societies. All provinces,

moreover, keep their child welfare legislation under constant review; amendments in the light of experience and of new concepts of child welfare are frequently made. The provinces also contribute financially to child welfare agencies and, in varying degrees, supervise child welfare programs. In addition, they provide central services such as training programs for child welfare staffs and clearance services which make possible province-wide placement of children for adoption.

#### Development of Comprehensive Services

Since the First World War there has been a broad expansion of child welfare services, both those provided by public agencies and those offered by children's aid societies. By the 1920's child welfare services were moving beyond their initial pre-occupation with child protection and, with the enactment of new provincial legislation, the agencies extended their programs in the areas of adoption and work with unmarried parents. Other responsibilities which have been added more recently include, to mention but two, the carrying out of investigations under the federal family allowances program and also into the circumstances of children whose parents are involved in divorce actions.

The extension of the service has required both larger and better qualified staffs. Agencies in smaller centres have increased their staff from one or two, characteristic of the 1920's, to ten or more in many present day organizations.



Staffs of agencies serving larger centres range upward to that of the largest metropolitan children's aid society which has a staff of over 300.

A recognition of the importance and the complexity of the human problems with which child welfare agencies have to deal has led to an increasing emphasis on well-qualified personnel. To secure staff with the education and training required to give the desired quality of casework service, supervision and administration, child welfare agencies have increasingly sought to employ persons with graduate training at a School of Social Work.

#### Integration of Family and Child Welfare

Services for children and services for families, to a very large extent, developed separately in Canada. In recent years there has been a trend toward bringing the two services together or toward achieving their better co-ordination.

The development of child welfare in specialized agencies grew out of the agencies' administration of provincial legislation. The legislation has tended to define the core of child welfare as protection, adoption and work on behalf of children of unmarried parents. This has not restricted the agencies to these areas but it has made for concentration upon them.

The voluntary family welfare agencies also offer, as noted earlier, specialized services. The family agency, however, has not assumed responsibility for administering public legislation and there is thus no element of statutory authority in the work it does with families and individuals. This distinguishes, somewhat, its approach from that of the child welfare agency in the latter's work with families where the reported neglect of children requires investigation and action backed by law.

In general, however, both child welfare agencies and family welfare agencies accept the same social work philosophy and, in the use of social casework, employ the same method in working with their clients. Recent emphasis in family welfare agencies on reaching families which have shown limited capacity to seek help on their own is having the effect of reducing differences in the approach of family welfare and child welfare agencies.

These tendencies, together with the steadily growing recognition of the importance of treating the child within the framework of the family, have led to many efforts to combine family and child welfare services. Some children's aid societies, especially in rural areas, have long functioned virtually as family agencies while also carrying their child welfare responsibilities. There are, as well, a number of combined family and child services operating under various auspices in different parts of Canada. A combined agency

serving a mixed rural and urban area has been organized in Peel County, Ontario, and combined agencies serving cities are found in Moncton, New Brunswick and Victoria, British Columbia. Examples of combined agencies under religious auspices are the Jewish Family and Child Services in some of the metropolitan centres and the diocesan welfare services of the Roman Catholic Church in the Province of Quebec which, in the post-war period, have developed integrated family and child welfare programs.

Developments in the public field reflects a similar trend in some provinces where child welfare services are being integrated with the programs, referred to above, that are designed to assist the family through income maintenance and other measures.

While formidable difficulties stand in the way of achieving the goals either of combined or more closely co-ordinated family and child services, there is unmistakable movement in that direction.

#### Present Organization of Child Welfare Services

Before a more detailed consideration of child welfare programs can be undertaken, it is necessary to examine briefly the present organization of the programs in the Canadian provinces and in the Yukon Territory and the Northwest Territories which, like the provinces, carry responsibility for child welfare services.

Newfoundland

Child welfare services in Newfoundland, are provided directly by the Province through over fifty regional welfare offices with supervision by the Child Welfare Director, Department of Public Welfare, St. John's.

Prince Edward Island

In Prince Edward Island welfare services for children are provided directly by the Province through the Director of Child Welfare, Department of Welfare and Labour, Charlottetown. Some services are also given by family agencies in Charlottetown and Summerside.

Nova Scotia

Services for children in Nova Scotia are provided by twelve children's aid societies under the supervision of the provincial Director of Child Welfare, Department of Public Welfare, Halifax. The Province offers direct service from four district offices in the remaining areas.

New Brunswick

The child welfare program in New Brunswick is carried out by seventeen children's aid societies under the supervision of the Provincial Child Welfare Officer, Department of Health and Social Services, Fredericton.



### Quebec

Child welfare services in the Province of Quebec are provided by agencies and institutions mainly under religious auspices. The Department of Social Welfare, Quebec City, supervises Youth Protection Schools which receive both neglected and delinquent children.

### Ontario

The child welfare program in Ontario is carried out by fifty-five children's aid societies covering all parts of the Province. The work of the societies in carrying out provincial legislation is under the supervision of the Provincial Director of Child Welfare, Department of Public Welfare, Toronto.

### Manitoba

Four children's aid societies supervised by the Director of Child Welfare, Department of Health and Public Welfare, Winnipeg, and a combined family and child welfare agency under sectarian auspices provide services in the most populated areas of the Province, including the City of Winnipeg. In other areas child welfare services are provided by the Province through district offices.

### Saskatchewan

In Saskatchewan services for the welfare of children are provided by the Province through regional field staffs under the direction of the Director of Child Welfare, Department of Social Welfare and Rehabilitation, Regina.

### Alberta

Child welfare services in Alberta are provided by the Province and by the municipalities. The program is under the direction of the provincial Child Welfare Commission. The chairman of the Commission and administrative head of the program is the Superintendent of Child Welfare, Department of Public Welfare, Edmonton.

### British Columbia

In British Columbia services for children are provided by the Province under the Superintendent of Child Welfare, Department of Health and Welfare, Victoria, through regional offices of the Department. Under the supervision of the Province services are provided in the City of Vancouver by two children's aid societies and in Victoria by a combined family and child welfare agency.

### Yukon

Child welfare services in the Yukon are provided by the Superintendent of Child Welfare, Territorial Government, Whitehorse, a children's aid society in Whitehorse, church organizations and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

### Northwest Territories

In the Northwest Territories, welfare services for children are provided by the Superintendent of Child Welfare for the Northwest Territories, Northern Administration and

Lands Branch Department of Northern Affairs and National Resources, Ottawa, a children's aid society in Yellowknife, church organizations and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.





## CHILD WELFARE PROGRAMS

It will be apparent from the above discussion of the development and present organization of child welfare agencies across Canada that a number of differences exist in their programs. There is sufficient similarity, however, to justify a general review of them. Most of the agencies provide comprehensive services embracing protection, child care, adoption and services to unmarried parents, and while these major components of a comprehensive program are closely inter-related, they nonetheless lend themselves to separate consideration.

### Protection Services

Child protection legislation in nine provinces and the Youth Protection Schools Act in Quebec, provide the legal basis of the protection services offered by Canadian child welfare agencies. The legislation embodies the authority of the state to protect children who are being neglected. Where a court of law finds that "neglect" as defined in legislation exists, a child may be removed from his parents and placed under the guardianship of a child welfare agency. The law also provides certain sanctions including fine and imprisonment for those guilty of causing neglect.

The provision of protection services by child welfare agencies is carried out within this framework of authority. The agency is called upon to investigate

reported cases of neglect and, where it is necessary for a child's safety, to "apprehend" or take the child into temporary care and bring him before a Court. Protection of a child through his removal from his home is, however, an extreme measure. The term, "protection" normally refers to measures to protect a child who receives the agency's service while remaining in his own home. The objective of modern child protection services is to help families in which neglect has been reported to correct the conditions associated with the neglect. When a careful appraisal reveals that the child is being seriously damaged and that the family is incapable either temporarily or permanently of giving him adequate care, steps are taken to bring the child into the care of the agency.

Protection services through casework, seek to mobilize the strength and capacities for improvement possessed by the family and to bring to its aid such community resources as may be needed to raise its standards of care for its children. The casework service of the agency may extend over a lengthy period and, even where it has been necessary on a temporary basis to remove a child from his parents, casework will continue with the parents with a view to restoring the family's capacity to provide adequate care.

A high degree of success in child protection work has been achieved by many agencies especially those which have had qualified case workers working under good supervision and with moderate caseloads. Where the agencies have been able to call

upon well-developed community resources, their effectiveness has been increased. An adequate public assistance program is of particular importance. Educational, recreational and health services, including mental health and child guidance facilities, also have an immediate bearing upon the protective work of child welfare agencies. Those communities in which such services are established are able both to reduce the incidence of child protection problems and to make easier the treatment of those cases of neglect which appear. In recognition of this fact child welfare agencies have traditionally been in the forefront of movements for improved community conditions and services.

#### Juvenile Correctional Services

The child who is neglected or lacks adequate care in his own home is not infrequently the child who comes into conflict with the law. For this reason juvenile correctional services have a close relation to child protection programs.

Correctional services for children in Canada are governed in a large measure by the Juvenile Delinquents Act, a federal statute first enacted in 1909. The Act provides that the provinces may set up Juvenile Courts and appoint Juvenile Court Judges. In some provinces the legislation setting up these Courts forms part of a general Child Welfare Act.

The central provision of the Juvenile Delinquents Act provides that when a child is adjudged to have committed one

of a number of actions which constitute an offense known as a delinquency, he is dealt with by a Court not as an offender "but as one in a condition of delinquency and therefore requiring help and guidance and proper supervision". The Judge of a Juvenile Court is thus given wide discretionary powers. To assist the Judge, the Court normally has a probation staff of one or more officers who perform a variety of functions. These include the securing of information about the child, his family and his environment on which the Judge may base his decision, and the major function of supervising children placed on probation by the Judge. Some Courts utilize the staff of local child welfare agencies for probation work and in some provinces the juvenile delinquent may be made a ward of the child welfare authority. This is a plan used in cases where it seems advisable to remove a child from his home but where committal to a training school or other correctional institution is not regarded as being in the child's interest.

#### Child Care Services

Children who, for a variety of reasons cannot be adequately protected or cared for in their own homes, may be taken into the care of child welfare agencies, with the agencies assuming some or all of the rights and responsibilities of parents. Children may come into the agencies' care at the request of their parents on what is frequently called a "non-ward basis". No transfer of guardianship is involved in such cases although the agency, by arrangement with the parents,



undertakes to assume either all aspects, or specified aspects of the care of the children concerned. Most of the children in the care of Canadian child welfare agencies have been made wards of the agencies by a court, with a complete or partial transfer of guardianship from the parents to the agency. In nearly all the provinces children may be made temporary wards with a prospect of returning to their own families, or permanent wards where no such return is envisaged. Where a child is made a permanent ward, the agency is responsible for his long-term planning which may include adoption placement. Where an adoption plan cannot be made, a permanent ward continues to be a responsibility of the agency until wardship is terminated; this is at age twenty-one in four provinces, eighteen in another four and seventeen in two.

In the case of both temporary and permanent wardship the agency's responsibilities toward children in care involve the planning of living arrangements and of such other essentials for the child's well-being as clothing, education and medical and dental care. It also embraces the supervision of the child, usually in a foster home, involving casework services with the child and those directly in charge of him. The aim of the agency is to provide a standard of care which will promote the child's physical, mental and moral well being.

The use of foster homes for the majority of children in the care of Canadian child welfare agencies involves the agencies in a foster home program. Many agencies find it

necessary to use a number of media of communication such as newspapers and radio to interpret foster home care and to interest suitable persons in becoming foster parents. "Foster home finding" including interpretation and the interviewing and selection of foster parents is a major part of the total program relating to children in an agency's care.

### Adoption

Legislation placing adoption within the child welfare framework was passed in most Canadian provinces in the 1920's. Adoption has since become an increasingly important part of the program of child welfare agencies. It is regarded as the best plan for those children in the care of child welfare agencies who are legally free for adoption and for whom adopting parents can be found who are able to offer good care, affection and security.

Children placed for adoption by child welfare agencies include wards of the society and non-wards where consents to adoption have been signed by the child's parent or parents. Children in the non-ward category are usually those born out of wedlock and placed with the agency by unmarried mothers who have sought the help of the agency.

The child welfare agency also has a responsibility, in most provinces, for a child placed for adoption by an individual or a body other than a child welfare agency. The agency is asked to visit the adopting home and on the basis of interviews with the adopting parents, together with other enquiries, to prepare a report containing a recommendation about the

suitability of the adoption. This is considered by the court in the process of completing the adoption.

While the provision that the Court shall receive the report of a child welfare agency before completing an adoption provides some safeguard for children placed independently, good adoption practice in Canada recognizes the desirability of the child's placement by a child welfare agency and supervision by the agency during the probationary period. As part of its continuing adoption program, the agency's duties include the finding and study of adoption homes. It is normally able to place a child in a home suited to his needs. Confidentiality can be maintained and the interests of all parties to the adoption -- the child, the natural parent or parents and the adopting parent -- can be more effectively safeguarded than in independent adoptions.

Adoption has been increasingly emphasized in Canada in recent years. It has attained a high degree of acceptance by the public, to the extent that in many communities the number of families wishing to adopt children exceeds, by a wide margin, children being placed for adoption. The preference, however, is for the adoption of children under one year of age. Older children, those with physical handicaps, and those of minority racial backgrounds are less easily placed and, accordingly, increased attention is being given to their placement. In a number of provinces adoption clearance services have been established through which adoptions can be arranged on a province-wide basis rather than being limited to the community in which a particular agency operates.

Services for Children Born Out of Wedlock

It was recognized early in the development of child welfare services in Canada that children born out of wedlock present special problems and that special legislation and services were required to safeguard their interests. Legislation for children of unmarried parents was accordingly passed in all provinces and its administration and the provision of appropriate services became, in general, the responsibility of child welfare agencies.

Where adequate financial support is not obtainable from the putative father, assistance is normally provided from public funds. Some provinces assume the full costs of such assistance to the unmarried mother rather than have a portion of the cost borne by the municipality in which she has legal residence. This helps to secure adequacy of service and assists in preserving confidentiality, which may be affected if it is necessary to refer the unmarried mother's request for assistance back to her home community from which she has probably moved for her confinement.

Child welfare agencies, in addition to aiding the unmarried mother in securing financial support, offer help with the problems she may encounter before, during and after her confinement. This involves assistance in many practical ways including planning for hospitalization and for living arrangements, often in a distant community. In addition, the agencies attempt to help the mother with the intense emotional problems which are normally associated with unmarried motherhood. The relationship developed between the agency's caseworker and the



unmarried mother provides the means for the mother to clarify her thinking and resolve her feelings in respect to her family, her expected child, the father and the future of both herself and her child. The agency's help to the mother often extends through the period following her child's birth when her own rehabilitation and plans for her child are uppermost concerns.

Of particular importance is the role of the agency in helping the unmarried mother to reach a sound and well-considered decision on whether to retain or to relinquish her child. If the decision is to retain the child she may wish the agency to provide temporary care. If the decision is for relinquishment one of the following courses may be taken depending on provincial legislation, agency policy and the circumstances of the case: the child may be placed for adoption without a change in guardianship; the child may be made a ward of the agency by the Court; the child's guardianship may be transferred (in certain provinces) by assignment, that is by a written instrument signed by the parent. The last two methods provide agency guardianship at once and make possible other forms of care if, for a number of reasons, adoption is not a suitable plan for the child.

While the main emphasis in the child welfare agency's unmarried parent work is upon the protection of children, service to the mother is recognized as being highly important in itself as well as being essential in the interests of the child. Many agencies also offer a casework service to the

fathers of children born out of wedlock, reflecting the view that such service may be of assistance to the father as well as helping in planning for the mother and the child.

## ADMINISTRATION OF CHILD WELFARE SERVICES

### Legislation and Organization

It has been noted that the administration of child welfare services in most provinces takes the form of locally organized children's aid societies operating under provincial legislation and supervision, or of direct provincial service, or of a combination of these two forms of administration, with children's aid societies covering part of the province and provincial services in others. There are some variants to these patterns. In Alberta, responsibilities for certain child welfare services are delegated to the municipalities. In Prince Edward Island, three family agencies under private auspices offer certain child welfare services. In the Province of Quebec, services are administered by institutions and agencies under private and usually religious auspices and by Youth Protection Schools.

Separate acts respecting child protection, adoption and children of unmarried parents are found in the provinces of Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Quebec and British Columbia. Provinces in which these and other matters are brought together in a composite Act are Newfoundland, Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta.

### Financing

The provision of the many services offered by child welfare agencies involves the expenditure of substantial sums of money. While the costs of providing professional services

in such aspects of the agency's program as protection and adoption are considerable, the largest outlays are for child care. In addition to the cost of casework services for the children in the agency's care, are the children's maintenance expenditures, including, medical, dental and other services, as well as board and clothing. In providing the staff and facilities for all aspects of its programs and in meeting the maintenance needs of the children for whom it is responsible, the agency is involved in a sizeable operation requiring sound financial management.

From the differences, described above, in the organization of child welfare services, it will be evident that there are differences in the basis on which they are financed. In the provinces of Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island, Saskatchewan and Alberta where all or nearly all the services are under public auspices, the funds for child welfare come almost wholly from public sources. A more complex situation obtains in Quebec where the institutions and agencies receive assistance from the Province and municipalities under the terms of the Public Charities Act, where the Youth Protection Schools are largely financed through the Department of Social Welfare, and where a number of the child serving agencies secure a considerable measure of support from private sources, principally community chests or federated welfare funds. In Nova Scotia, Manitoba and British Columbia, welfare services are financed from wholly public sources in those areas where the service is provided by the Province. The children's aid



societies which are organized elsewhere in those three provinces, and throughout all of New Brunswick and Ontario, are also supported mainly by public funds, with the basis of sharing as between the province and municipalities for the maintenance costs of wards varying considerably from province to province. Nearly all the children's aid societies also receive a significant measure of support from voluntary sources.

Voluntary funds may come from private agency campaigns or, more generally, through community chests or united appeals. The societies traditionally raised funds from voluntary sources to finance their protective services while public funds paid the costs of maintaining children taken into the societies' care under the terms of provincial legislation. As the extent of the protective services grew and were increasingly recognized as essential, public grants from the provinces and, in some communities from the municipalities, were extended to the societies. These grants have taken a number of forms including mileage for visits to clients for specified purposes, grants based on the amounts received by the societies from their private financial campaigns, fees for conducting certain types of investigations, grants based on the quality of the work of the societies and grants for the protective and other services not directly involved in the maintenance and care of children who are wards of the agency.

Federal family allowances are payable in respect to children in the care of recognized child welfare agencies and

are a significant item in child welfare financing. Federal regulations require that the allowance be expended directly on the care of the child for whom they are payable; up to four dollars a month may be used for the child's board and the remainder must be used to provide "extras", that is goods and services over and above those which would normally be supplied to children in the agencies' care.

### Staffing

At an early point in the development of child welfare services in Canada those charged with their organization and direction became aware of the need to secure high calibre staff. Both the administration of child welfare agencies and the direct services they provided proved to be complex and demanding. The need for special training became apparent and child welfare agencies were among the first to promote the organization of training courses and to work for the establishment of schools of social work. Close relations between the schools and the child welfare agencies have continued, with many agencies providing the setting for the field experience of a high percentage of social work students. The child welfare field has also proved to be one of the major employers of the graduates of Canada's eight schools of social work.

Child welfare agencies have not been able to secure as many well qualified personnel as they have needed. While numerous child welfare agencies have been able to maintain competitive standards of salaries and working conditions for

their casework, supervisory and administrative staff, some have not been in this position. This failure to fill all positions with well qualified personnel is only in part a result of problems of financing child welfare programs, it also reflects the acute shortage of graduate social workers across the whole field of social welfare.

The extent of the shortage was indicated in the nation-wide Survey of Welfare Positions undertaken in 1951 to assess the demand for social workers in Canada.<sup>1/</sup> At that time 138 reporting agencies classified as child welfare reported that 46 per cent of their 881 welfare positions (administrative, supervisory, and direct service) were graduates of schools of social work, and that a further 19 per cent had taken some courses at a School. This was a much more favourable situation than obtained for the welfare field as a whole. Nevertheless, in terms of recruiting policy, the child welfare agencies reported that in filling vacancies, existing or potential, they would like to secure graduate social workers for over 90 per cent of their welfare positions.

There is little reason to suppose that in the years since the Survey the agencies have succeeded in achieving this objective. The output of the schools of social work has not been able to keep pace with the growth of services or the demand for professionally trained personnel. At the same time

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<sup>1/</sup> Research and Statistics Division, Department of National Health and Welfare, Survey of Welfare Positions Report, 1954, General Series No. 3, Summary of Report, General Series No. 8, 1955.

there is evidence that child welfare agencies have secured substantial numbers of social work graduates and have taken other means, including increased use of in-service training, to improve the qualifications of their staffs.

### Reporting and Statistics

The adequacy of current reporting on child welfare is receiving a good deal of attention by social agencies and Departments of Welfare. Consideration is being given to two main aspects of the question: ways and means of improving reporting for purposes of assessment and planning and the broader question of laying a basis for selected national statistics in this field.

Agencies under voluntary auspices make annual reports to their boards and membership and, to varying degrees, submit statistical and other reports to local welfare councils and community chests. They are required to report on certain aspects of their programs to provincial Departments of Welfare. The annual reports of the provincial Departments, which contain data on both public and private child welfare programs, thus provide the major source of information on the nature of the services and the number of children receiving them.

The statistical data presented in these ten reports reflect differences in provincial legislation, in the services offered, and in the selection of data, as well as some variation in definition and concept. This lack of comparability has proved somewhat of a hindrance in the discussion of common problems among the provinces and is an obstacle to the



development of even minimal national statistics in the field of child welfare.<sup>1/</sup>

The lack of national data has been felt by social agencies and by the Department of National Health and Welfare.<sup>2/</sup>

The Canadian Welfare Council took action on the problem with the appointment of a National Committee to study the possibilities of greater comparability in reporting. The provincial Directors of Child Welfare also moved forward in this direction, examining their own records and giving consideration to common problems at their annual meetings. At the request of both groups, the Research and Statistics Division of the Department of National Health and Welfare undertook research in this field, with particular attention to problems of definition and areas and methods of reporting. Work on these projects is going forward.

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<sup>1/</sup> There has been some national reporting on institutions for children. These were included in statistics on welfare institutions collected at five year intervals, from 1931 to 1951 inclusive, by the Dominion Bureau of Statistics.

<sup>2/</sup> As for example in the preparation of the Department's periodic reports on child welfare in Canada for the United Nations. The Bureau of Social Affairs to which these reports are made drew attention to the paucity of statistical data on child welfare available from member countries generally and noted, also, that those which were available were primarily for administrative purposes. It expressed the hope that member nations would work towards reporting which would show the effectiveness of services in meeting needs of children.



INSTITUTIONAL CARE FOR CHILDREN

The preceding discussion was concerned mainly with the work of child welfare agencies. A comment is also required on the role of child welfare institutions.

It was mentioned earlier that the first child welfare services in Canada were provided by orphanages and other institutions. With the development of children's aid societies and public child welfare agencies, non-institutional services, emphasizing adoption and the care of children in foster homes, were widely adopted. In Quebec, where institutional care was traditionally predominant, an accelerating trend toward non-institutional programs has been in evidence in the period since the Second World War, primarily as a result of the organization of diocesan family and child welfare services under the auspices of the Roman Catholic Church.

While the care of children in institutions is on the wane, a significant trend toward improving the quality of institutional care is evident. Measures to this end include the re-formulation of regulations respecting buildings, management, staffing and program; the reduction of the numbers of children normally cared for in an institution or, alternatively, the creation within it of smaller groups of children cared for in "family units"; the establishment of training courses for institutional staff; and the organization of associations of children's institutions committed to raising the standards of institutional care of children.

Institutional care is increasingly regarded, not as an alternative to the forms of care provided by child welfare agencies, but as one form of care for certain specific purposes and as part of a comprehensive child welfare program. Child welfare agencies, while regarding foster home placement as the most desirable plan for most of the children in their care, have always made use of institutions, and continue to do so for children with certain types of need. Care in small institutional units is recognized as suitable for some children forced to be away from their own homes for short period, for certain children being prepared for placement in foster homes or adoption homes and for some teenage children who find it easier to fit into an institution than into a foster home setting.

While the majority of children's institutions operate under auspices and direction different from that of child welfare agencies, the agencies and institutions frequently enter into close working relationships. Often the institution and the local agency make arrangements for the agency to assume responsibility for admission of children to the institution and for providing, where needed, a casework relationship with the family, directed toward the return of the children to the family from the institution. Other institutions, also recognizing the need for careful intake and planning with the family in relation to the child's future, employ a caseworker as a member of the institution's staff.

A majority of children's institutions provide generalized, custodial care but specialized institutions for



children presenting particular problems have also been in existence for many years. A few institutions providing educational programs for blind and for deaf children and also homes for retarded children have long been established in some provinces and, as noted earlier, institutions have also been established as needed for juvenile delinquents requiring correctional care away from their own homes.

A more recent type of specialized institution is that designed to serve children whose behaviour problems make it difficult or impossible for them to receive or respond to foster home care. A small number of these institutions in various parts of Canada are providing residential care for emotionally disturbed children and other institutions with this type of service are being developed, either as new institutions or as the result of a change within existing institutions from a custodial to a treatment program.



COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION FOR CHILD WELFARE

It was noted earlier that the effectiveness of a child welfare program depends to a considerable degree on the availability and quality of other community resources. It was natural therefore that many of the early children's aid societies should become centres for action on behalf of children in many spheres now lying outside the immediate programs of the societies, such as corrections, health and recreation. With the development of councils of social agencies and later of welfare councils, co-ordination, planning and action affecting the general well-being of children came increasingly into the sphere of action of these bodies.

In 1920 the Canadian Council on Child Welfare was formed as a national centre for furthering the interests of children and when, in 1935, the organization became the Canadian Welfare Council, its work on behalf of children became the responsibility of a special division within it, now the Division of Family and Child Welfare. The membership of this Division consists of agencies and institutions in the fields of child and family welfare as well as interested individuals drawn from all parts of Canada. The Division is able to work for improved child welfare services through its nation-wide study committees, conferences, a periodical, "Concerning Families and Children" and consultative services offered by its staff.

In local welfare councils child welfare is also given prominence, some councils having committees or divisions served by professional staff devoted wholly or principally to advancing child welfare in the community.

A somewhat different type of organization, namely associations of children's aid societies, exist in three provinces. Their aim is to promote child welfare generally, though with particular reference to the special responsibilities of their member societies. As noted earlier, children's institutions in some provinces have also formed associations with similar objectives.

















